GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:56
ANSWERED ON:19.11.2007
POOR QUALITY WHEAT
Malhotra Prof. Vijay Kumar;Yadav Shri Kailash Nath Singh

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the red wheat imported recently for distribution under Public Distribution System (PDS) has been rejected by the States for being poor in quality;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereto, State-wise;

(c) whether the samples of wheat were tested in various laboratories before import;

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof;

(e) whether some States have requested the Union Government for supply of domestic wheat for distribution under PDS; and

(f) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR)

(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (f) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 56 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 19.11.2007 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a) & (b): State Governments of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have informed that the imported red wheat allocated under TPDS is not being preferred by TPDS beneficiaries. Complaints about quality of imported red wheat have also been received from State Governments of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

On receipt of complaints, officers of Department of Food & Public Distribution and Food Corporation of India jointly collected samples of imported red wheat from Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra regions during second fortnight of October 2007 and got them analysed for quality. This analysis has shown all samples conforming to quality standards prescribed under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1955. Comparison of results of analysis with quality parameters of indigenous wheat have also revealed that the quality of imported red wheat is comparable to that of indigenous wheat.

(c) & (d): Yes Sir. Before the imported wheat is allowed to be discharged from the ships at Indian ports, quality of the wheat is tested by the authorities competent under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act and by the Plant Quarantine authorities. Only if the imported wheat is found conforming to all the specifications laid down, it is allowed to be discharged from the ships. Out of ships of imported wheat arrived so far during the current year, the wheat in each of them has been found to be meeting the required quality specifications.

(e) & (f): The State Governments of Kerala and Andhra Pradesh requested for allocation of imported red wheat together with domestic wheat. As per their request, imported and domestic wheat in the ratio of 50 : 50 has been issued by FCI depending upon availability. Recently, the State Governments of Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan have also requested for allocation of only domestic wheat or imported white wheat under TPDS. However, in view of the limited quantities of indigenous wheat available in the Central Pool, it is not possible to allocate only indigenous wheat to the States.